

"All the News That's UNFIT to Print"

Joachim Joesten's

" TRUTH LETTER "

An Antidote to Official Mendacity and Newsfaking in the Press

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Editorial: Let's have a lot more of that "offensive" probing, Dr. Wecht!

Fourth Anniversary

So here I go again saying MANY HAPPY RETURNS to myself, or rather to that sprightly brainchild (or should I say "brain brat"?) of mine, TRUTH LETTER. I don't know how many more there will be, but none could be happier, I guess, than the present one with the first flicker of light discernible at last at the end of the long dark tunnel, thanks mainly to Jim Garrison and Dr. Cyril Wecht. With the truth at last in motion, we may get some real action come November, provided of course that lying incubus, Richard Nixon, is tossed into the trashcan of history by the voters, along with his whole nasty gang of professional crooks, cheats and liars.

Just in time for this hopeful celebration, I have just received from a lady in Leeds, England, a congratulatory note saying: "Dear Mr. Joesten, - I have just heard about your TRUTH LETTER, and would like to contribute to your mailing list, - also to buy some of your books - I do have three, but would much rather have signed copies from you. Are they still available? I have all of Penn Jones' books and I think between you, you are doing a marvellous work. - Sincerely etc."

But then, on the other hand, there are also those distressing letters like the one I received not long ago from one of the earliest and most devoted assassination researchers who wrote: "...I have decided not to renew my subscription for the time being, at least. I'm afraid that I gave up a long time ago on the idea that the truth concerning the assassinations would ever come out during the foreseeable future, if ever. I admire your tenacity! I, too, was tenacious for about seven years and now I have become resigned to the futility of even making a dent. - With best regards, etc."

One among us has not known at times that feeling of despondency and utter frustration? That's what the other side is banking on: that resignation will spread as time goes on, with some critics fading away, others quitting in disgust and public interest in the matter slowly disintegrating. And that is precisely why the rest of us must stand up and be counted. Let's say NO to resignation and continue the fight!

Dr. Wecht's Sensational Disclosures

To some of my readers, the lead story in the last issue of TL must have been stale news. For, by the time they got their copy of this newsletter, Dr. Wecht had already made public - much earlier than I had anticipated - the gist of his findings at the National Archives and some papers at any rate had carried the story. As usual, however, everything was done by the newsmen to play down, distort, or even suppress the truly sensational statements Dr. Wecht made to the press after spending two whole days at the Archives examining the JFK autopsy materials. I understand that he did a very thorough job, dictating tapes as he examined the material, drawing a stack of diagrams and mapping all wounds and fragments accurately. In doing so, Dr. Wecht used the tools of his profession as a forensic scientist of the highest standing, such as transparent grids which were

taped to the X-rays and photographs so that precise measurement could be made.

Dr. Wecht gave two interviews, both on Aug. 26. The first was an exclusive talk with Fred P. Graham of The New York Times, the same reporter who had previously interviewed Dr. John K. Lattimer (NYT, January 9, 1972) and had been told by the latter that his brief visit to the Archives had "eliminated any doubt completely" concerning Oswald's guilt and sole responsibility for the assassination. TRUTH LETTER has learned that Graham was instrumental in persuading Burke Marshall to let the other side, i.e. Dr. Wecht, inspect the autopsy materials, too. That move shows a commendable measure of objectivity on the part of Mr. Graham. However, his story, as printed in the NYT, of August 27, puts the emphasis heavily on the missing brain - more about this later - and glosses over some other very important statements made by Dr. Wecht. It is little short of scandalous - but in the best tradition of newsfaking - when the NYT buries in a most inconspicuous place a crushing coroner's verdict like the following: "He (Wecht) concluded that Oswald could not have fired the three bullets so fast on his bolt-action rifle, adding, 'That proves a conspiracy right there.'" (emphasis mine - J.J.)

The prominent forensic scientist was even more outspoken - unless, that is, he said the same things also to Mr. Graham, but they were censored out of the published text - in talking to a group of other journalists later. The AP distributed a fairly long dispatch about this interview which quoted Dr. Wecht as saying that it was "physically impossible" for only one gunman to have slain Kennedy. Dr. Wecht then fired these bombshells at the Warren crowd and its stooge Lattimer:

"The fact is that the physical evidence shows that not any one person could have been a snooter. There had to have been at least two people shooting." And -

"The magic bullet theory is the nine ome non of the Warren Report. It is absolutely untenable from a scientific standpoint."

Wecht had some cutting, but amply justified, things to say about the Lattimer performance. Asked by a reporter why, in his view, the urologist had been chosen as the first private physician to examine the autopsy materials, he candidly replied, "because he had made himself into a pro-government buff on this... (dots in the original - J.J.) They sent Lattimer in there because they knew what he would say and what he would do."

Asked who "they" were, Wecht replied, "The people who are eager to see to it that nothing is done to reopen this matter."

None of the foregoing is really news to TR readers, for I have been saying the same things for a long time. But it is a sensational development that an expert of Dr. Wecht's caliber now should have stated, then publicly and so unequivocally at that. His is the voice of authority and expertise that can't be dismissed as "speculation" or "paranoia."

and who are "the people who are eager to see to it that nothing is done to reopen this matter"? They are the Usurper, LBJ; his accomplice and successor by dint of a prearranged game, Richard Nixon; Earl Warren and his worshippers; and all the establishment shoguns in and out of government. In all a word, all those who conspired to assassinate President Kennedy and to cover up their foul deed by any and all means. They sent Lattimer into the Archives to do another dirty job for them and he served them as well as he was able to.

Burke Marshall, too, belongs to that crowd. No doubt he has rued bitterly that he gave in to Mr. Graham's urgings and gave the green light to a man of Wecht's knowledge, ability and forthrightness. As a matter of fact, Marshall didn't even attempt to hide his feelings, as we shall see.

As far as I have been able to ascertain up to this point, none of the "leading" American newspapers and newsmagazines ran the AP-dispatch. However, it did get into the New York Sunday News, of all papers, (Aug. 27, 1972). To make things a little more palatable for its several million mostly moronic readers, the News used

this masterpiece of journalese as headline: "JFK Autopsy Bars 1-Killer Theory: Doc"

In a more dignified as well as appropriate manner, Germany's leading newspaper, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung headlined the AP-dispatch: "were there two Kennedy assassins after all? - Forensic scientists again doubt Warren Report."

The Missing Brain "Mystery"

Several "extremely relevant" items - to use Dr. Wecht's own words - were not made available to him. These included a container of formalin in which Kennedy's brain was preserved after it had been removed during the autopsy, as well as a number of microscopic slides of tissues removed from his bullet wounds. The fact that the brain was removed and "preserved for further study" is apparent from the records of the Warren Commission. But those who had possession of it - the Secret Service and the FBI - did not mean it to be studied by an independent expert with no faith in the Warren report, like Dr. Wecht; hence the formalin container was spirited away in time in the familiar style of intelligence agencies, so everybody involved could wash their hands of the matter.

The tremendous importance of inspecting the brain is self-evident from this remark by Dr. Wecht, as quoted in the AP-dispatch: "Looking at the X-rays, I discovered a dark, brownish-black object inside the brain.... (dots in the original - J.J.) Nobody ever mentioned this previously. Nobody ever described it."

The NYT story has a slightly different version: "Examination of the brain is necessary, Dr. Wecht said, because photographs of the top of the removed brain, which were shown to him, disclose a sizable foreign object that could have been a flattened bullet fragment or a brain tumor. In either event, he said, it is 'unacceptable' that the public has never been told what it was. He described the object as a parallelogram at least one-half by three quarters of an inch in size."

The statement - if attributed correctly by the AP reporter - "Nobody ever mentioned this previously" is not quite accurate. TRUTH LETTER, for one, has mentioned this foreign object in Kennedy's brain repeatedly. In the June 1, 1971 issue I quoted this extremely telltale passage from the 1968 "Panel Review": "In the central portion of its base - the reference is to Kennedy's brain, J.J. - there can be seen a gray brown rectangular structure measuring approximately 13 X 20 mm. Its identity cannot be established by The Panel."

Before that, I had quoted, in the December 1, 1970 issue of TL, from the Dr. Nichols Brief addressed to the US District Court for the District of Kansas on Oct. 13, 1970, as follows: "... This expert panel found many things which conflict with the original autopsy report. One of the most notable findings in the photographs is the presence of a 13 X 22 mm object in the base of the brain which was not mentioned by the autopsy physicians and others present at the autopsy. Attorney General Clark's expert review panel could not identify this object. The plaintiff wants to identify this object, in part, because he considers it might be a fragment of an explosive missile of a type heretofore not considered..."

It is true, though, that the public has never been told of the existence of this suspicious object in Kennedy's brain, for the report of the four panelists was never made public (except in TRUTH LETTER), nor was, of course, the Dr. Nichols Brief (again except in TL).

The spiriting away of the preserved brain by persons unknown clearly indicates that the forces behind the assassination are well aware of what would come to light if an independent expert like Dr. Wecht were to examine this mysterious object, or if it were to be identified through neutron activation analysis, as Dr. Nichols has suggested: the certitude that it was a bullet fragment that could not have come from Oswald's rifle. Most likely it is a piece of a frangible or dum-dum bullet fired by one of the assassins on the "Grassy Knoll."

Missing is also another piece of material evidence of the highest importance: the microscopic slides of tissues removed from the bullet wounds. As Dr. Wecht explained to the NYT reporter: "Entering bullets burn and soil tissues around the wound of entry but not at the point of exit. Thus the microscopic slides could settle the question whether the bullets that passed through the President's head and body had been fired from the rear."

To have that question settled in any other form than the Warren Commission did would of course be the last thing those responsible for the assassination would want to have happen. And since they control the FBI, the Secret Service and the CIA which all have the capability of making embarrassing evidence evaporate into thin air, it is not surprising that Dr. Wecht should have been told these items weren't at the archives and that nobody could tell where they were.

According to the NYT, the brain, the slides and possibly some other items were in a locked chest that was passed around from hand to hand most nonchalantly. First the Secret Service took charge of these medical items, then they were turned over to the late President's personal physician, Vice Admiral George G. Burkley, who in turn handed them, on April 26, 1965, to Kennedy's former personal secretary, Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln. This lady, who is now in a staff job at the House of Representatives (where she can be properly watched and controlled by the powers-that-be) then a few days later delivered the materials to Angie Nevelle, a secretary of Robert Kennedy. That was the end of the line, as far as anybody seems to know, for when the autopsy materials were formally turned over to the National Archives, in October 1966, the brain and the slides were not among them, or so that government agency claims. A neat disappearing act, I must say.

Burke Marshall, who had previously done a great deal to ingratiate himself with the powers-that-be and who is indeed an accessory-after-the-fact of the first water, (cf. TL, Feb. 15, 1972) spluttered with rage at Dr. Wecht's independent research which he called "offensive." According to the NYT story, Marshall "deplored Dr. Wecht's 'chasing after parts of the President's body because he hasn't found any evidence that anything else was wrong.'"

What kind of a silly remark is that? Quite apart from the fact that Wecht has found plenty of evidence that everything was wrong, as has been demonstrated above, it is the duty of coroners to chase after missing parts of a murdered person's body, as Marshall, who teaches law at Yale University, might know.

In conclusion, a word about the way the British press handled the story. The London Times, on August 28, published a brief story based primarily on what its counterpart in New York had written. It added, however, two paragraphs of interest:

"There was some disagreement on the substance of Dr. Wecht's allegations. Mr. Harold Weisberg, another critic of the official version of the assassination, today called Dr. Wecht's claims 'a further obfuscation of the truth.' In a telephone interview Mr. Weisberg said the Kennedy family had been blamed for withholding evidence about the assassination when in fact they were not responsible for this. The responsibility, he asserted, lay with such agencies of the Federal Government as the FBI and the national archives." I agree with this assessment by Weisberg, except for his charge of "obfuscation" by Dr. Wecht.

A reader in Belfast sent me a clipping from the local paper News Letter (8-29-72) which further quoted Wecht as saying: "I was quite amazed by the pristine shape of the bullet (CE 309 - J.J.)". and also this forceful comment: "Let's have an honest and full review. Let's cut out the games."

Scream-of-the-Month - Attorney General Kleindienst has promised that his probing of the Watergate Scandal, involving top Republican leaders, will be "the most extensive, thorough and comprehensive investigation since the assassination of President Kennedy." Sure - and on the same model.

Note: The series "The Shame of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis" continues in the next issue.